

SAN DIEGO COUNTY
VETERANS ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

County of San Diego Office of Military & Veterans Affairs
5560 Overland Avenue, Suite 310, San Diego, CA 92123
October 8, 2016

Meeting held at the Veterans Museum and memorial Center in Balboa Park (VMMC)

MEMBERS PRESENT

Michael Robledo, Chair, District 5; Nancy Owen, Vice Chair, Member-at-Large; Mary Beth Newton, District 1; Benjamin Dillingham III, Member-at-Large; John Weaver, District 4.

MEMBERS ABSENT

Ted Kagan, District 2 (E); Laurie Martell, District 3 (E); Will Rodriguez, Secretary, Member-at-Large (U).

OTHERS PRESENT

Wil Quintong, County of San Diego Office of Military & Veterans Affairs Officer; Tom Splitgerber, Executive Director, California Association of County Veteran Service Officers; Troy Wilson, prospective member Veterans Advisory Council.

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order by Michael Robledo, Chair

2. Pledge of Allegiance led by Tom Splitgerber

3. Introductions/Public Input

4. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

There was a motion to approve the September minutes. Motion passed.

5. Chairman's Report

Michael Robledo, Chair, reported on the Advisory Board Chair's Bi-Annual Meeting which he attended at the Health Services Complex on September 28, 2016. Michael reported that the Live Well Advance conference will be held on November 3, 2016 at the Town & Country Hotel. Live Well has been in existence for 5 years and has 124 participating partners. Michael also

shared the executive summary and other items pertinent to our Veterans Advisory Council. Currently the Office of Military & Veterans Affairs has 16 staff members.

Legislative-no report

One VA

Nancy was unable to attend the September meeting but minutes were distributed electronically to all VAC members. Of note was information on access to the VA. San Diego Medical Center Access shows 31/2 days for primary care which is better than the national average; 51/2 days for mental health which is slightly worse than the national average of 31/2 to 4 days and 71/2 to 8 days for specialty care. New initiatives are being developed to drive down wait times. Nancy to seek clarification on whether the "wait times" are to just get an appointment or to actually be seen.

Flu clinics will be held mid-October at VA locations.

Total burials at Fort Rosecrans reported as 114, 442. At Miramar-9, 791. Miramar National Cemetery is installing a Carillon Bell Tower. Dedication will be on Veterans Day at 9 a.m. The 30 foot tower will play songs/chimes/bells.

California Veterans Home at Chula Vista (CVVH)

Nancy reported that the current census is 304. She also reported that applicants for the administrator's position have been interviewed by CDVA. The selected nominee will need appointment by the Governor. Hopefully, a new administrator will be appointed by the end of the month.

United Veterans Council (UVC) no report

Office of Military & Veterans Affairs (OMVA)

Wil Quintong shared that the OMVA has doubled staff in the past year. They are currently recruiting three new positions. Some current employees seek other employment and new employees need to be trained and accredited as veteran service representatives (VSRs) which takes time. VSRs receive state as well as national accreditation. Current operating budget is \$2 million.

Wil also announced that the OMVA has become a partner in the Department of Defense Vietnam Commemoration recognition program and will be receiving pins and certificates that will be distributed to Vietnam era veterans at various events, the first being the Live Well event in North County on November 10, 2016 which is also the Marine Corps Birthday. A Vietnam Commemoration pin and certificate will be presented to Supervisor Bill Horn, a Vietnam veteran. More information on the event will be distributed.

On October 7, 2016 Supervisor Bill Horn recognized the Veterans Coalition as a “Live Well Partner” at the County Operations Center. 120-130 persons were in attendance.

6. Community Reports

John Weaver commented on the minutes from the One VA meeting, page 3, stated 11% of all decisions are appealed.” John related that many specific forms are needed to appeal and many veterans “give up” on filing appeals.

Michael Robledo related that letters have gone out to veterans who were evaluated for TBI saying that they need to be re-examined and reapply for a TBI disability because original exams may not have been conducted correctly.

Nancy Owen spoke of a press release regarding the San Diego Veterans Day Parade on November 11, 2016. Brian Sack, former director of Fleet Week San Diego, has joined “Veterans Week” as Executive Director. John Weaver reports that the parade committee is still in need of major funding for the parade this year.

7. Unfinished Business

Nancy Owen reports that she contacted Supervisor Ron Roberts office again recently to inquire about reappointment. Via e-mail from Nerea Urtasun was told that the board has not met yet to approve the reappointment. No word on the appointment of Troy Wilson who applied for Member-at-Large position that was held by Terry Jensen and which expired 1/3/2015.

8. New Business

None

9. Closing Remarks

None

10. Adjourned

Meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Chair: Michael Robledo